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**The History of
James Allan**

Newcastle-on-Tyne

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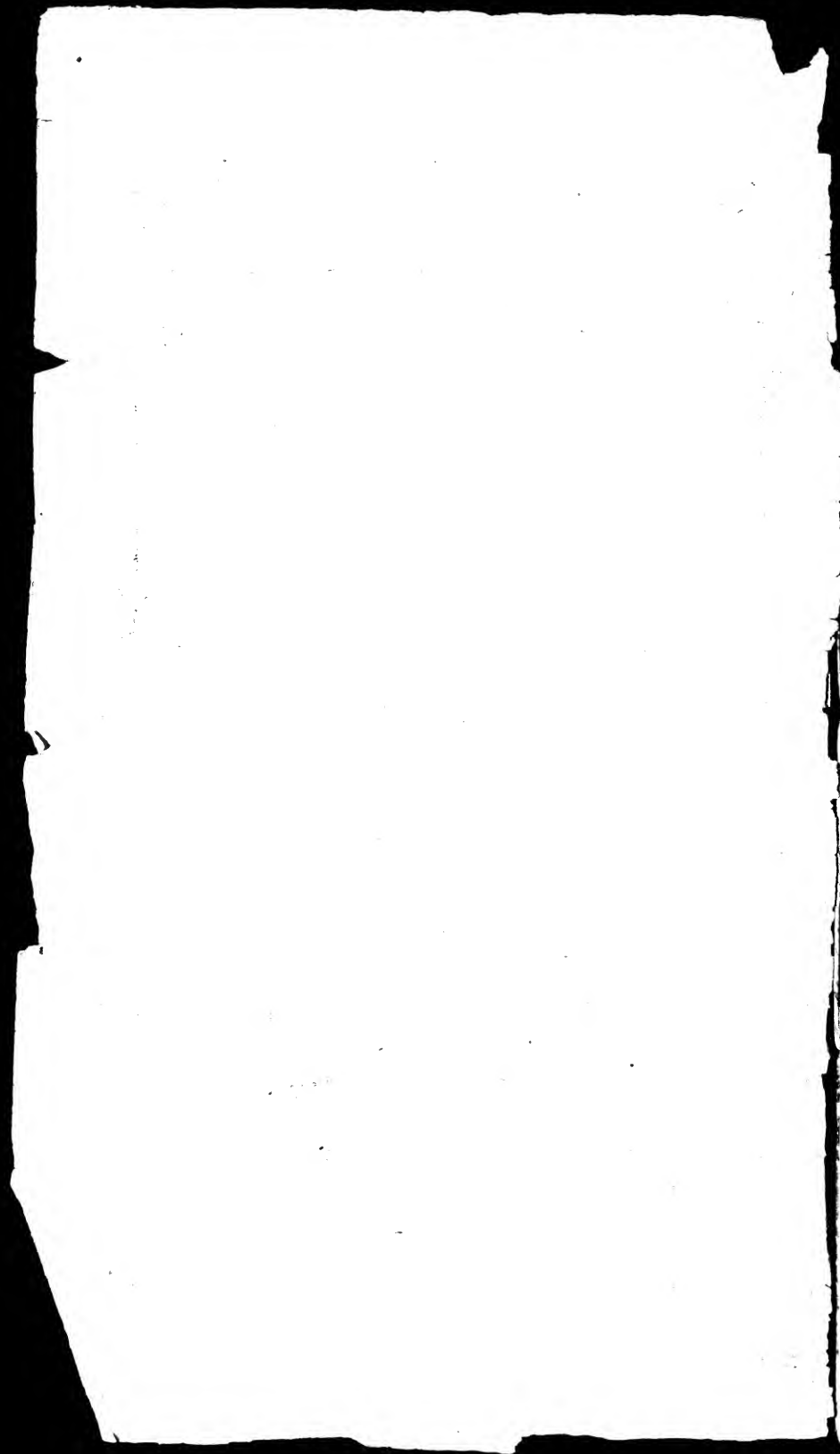
THE HISTORY OF JAMES ALLAN,

THE CELEBRATED
NORTHUMBERLAND PIPER.

"..... Allan, thou shalt screw thy drone,
And play up *Maggie Lauder* sweetly,
Or *Money-musk*, or *Dorrington*,
And we shall frisk and foot it neatly :
CROWD gain'd applause for monie a tune,
Few peer'd him in the High or Lawlan',
But neither he or Sandy Brown
Could trill a note like JEMMY ALLAN."



NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE :
JOHN GILBERT, (SUCCESSOR TO J. ROSS,)
ROYAL ARCADE.



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LIFE OF JAMES ALLAN.

WILLIAM ALLAN, commonly called **Old Will**, the father of **Jemmy Allan**, was born in the parish of **Simonburn**, in the west of **Northumberland**. At an early period he settled in the romantic wilds of **Rothbury**, where **Will** and his pipes were engaged in many a midnight revel.

James Allan, better known by the name of **Jemmy Allan**, was the youngest but one of **Old Will's** six children; he was born near **Rothbury** in **March, 1734**. In infancy **James** was accustomed to the most hardy treatment: by constant practice he became so unrivalled in athletic feats, that few durst encounter him in leaping, running, or wrestling. In early youth he was deemed handsome, while he displayed the most acute and inventive genius, which soon prostituted to acts of low cunning dissimulation. **Allan** began to thief in a small way: at first his depredations did not extend beyond the robbery of the neighbouring gardens; but he soon became such an adept, that whenever a **Gipsy** camp was in want, young **Jemmy** was sent out to forage, when all the hens, ducks, and geese within his reach became his prey.

When about 14 years of age, **Jemmy** evinced a strong desire to excel on the pipes. **Old Will** was delighted with his son's taste and zeal, and was therefore indefatigable in assisting his pupil in his exertions. In due time with much feasting, **Allan** was regularly installed among the privileged minstrels, and shortly afterwards, as an independent

man, joined the "faa gang" over which old *Will Faa* held the sovereignty for many years, and Allan had the honour of being frequently and kindly noticed by his majesty.

Allan's superior skill in pipe-music was soon known throughout Northumberland. At length his fame reached the ears of the Countess (afterwards Duchess) of Northumberland, who sent a message to James, requesting his attendance at the castle. This gratified Allan's ambition; but his clothes being coarse and much worn, and very unfit to make his appearance before a lady of such distinction, he had recourse to an expedient which soon raised him above this difficulty. He had noticed a farmer's only daughter, who had often cast a wistful eye towards him. He contrived to obtain a private interview with the fond girl: he told her of the sincerity of his love, the honour of his intentions, and the golden prospects that would flow from the patronage of the Countess, and at length delicately hinted at his present embarrassment. She rejoiced to see his difficulty so easily removed, and soon put him in possession of a sum sufficient to equip him genteelly. Having thus secured the ways and means, Allan set off to Alnwick with a light heart. The day after his arrival at the castle, he was ushered into the presence of the Countess: and, after he had mustered some degree of courage, he began to play, and acquitted himself in so masterly a style, that he was instantly ranked as one of her musicians, and shortly after appointed her own piper. Allan continued at the castle upwards of two years, during which his conduct was irreproachable. He then returned to his native village, and during his visit, he was precipitated into an unfortunate marriage with a young woman, who, by her violent temper, thriftless housewifery, and unfaithful conduct rendered

him miserable. Allan in consequence left her, and returned to Alnwick castle, resolving to forget his faithless wife;—but a sense of his wrongs haunted his mind—he drank deeply, neglected his duty at the castle, and became so regardless of his character that his company was shunned, and finding himself thus insulted, he determined to change his scene of action, and enlisted as a substitute in the Northumberland militia. The restraint of a military life not suiting his wayward habits, in a short time he deserted, and secreted himself in Newcastle.

One evening, when strolling down the Quay-side, he saw his wife Fanny stepping ashore from a ship, accompanied by a sailor: Allan made her a low bow, and being certain she, his only enemy, had quitted Rothbury, he immediately bent his course home. Allan's father and mother received him with the greatest affection, and for a time was very cautious of going out. However, there having to be an otter-hunt in the neighbourhood, he could not resist the temptation of enjoying the sport; and, during the hunt, the son of the high constable having said something to vex him, he tumbled the youth into the Coquet. The son, in revenge, persuaded his father to arrest him as a deserter, and a posse of constables was sent to secure him. As they were approaching the house, Jemmy's step-mother saw them and instantly bolted the door. One of the constables begged the old people to give up the offender, as his escape was impossible, when she replied, "Jemmy's off to Shields to take shipping for Lunnen." "I am glad of that," said the wily constable, "but we will just look in to satisfy all parties." In the meantime Jemmy made a noise at the back window, as if he meant to get out there, which the party hearing, they all ran back-

ward to catch him, when Old Will threw open the door, and ran off at his utmost speed, his wife standing in the doorway, shaking her apron, and screaming, "Run, Jemmy, run!" The constables immediately joined in pursuit; the stratagem succeeded; after Old Will had run about a mile, he leisurely drew up, and said, with a sarcastic grin, "I dare say Jemmy will be far enough off now,"—and so he was; for, in the meantime, he had stole quietly off in a different direction.

Allan shortly after made his appearance at Stagshaw-bank fair, where, on entering a tent, he met the sergeant of the company to which he was attached. The sergeant laid hold of his arm, and said "Is not your name James Allan?" Without replying, Allan laid him sprawling at his feet, and ran for it; but the cry being set, "Stop thief," he was taken and put into confinement until an escort was provided to convey him to his regiment. At length three hearty fellows arrived, and they set off to head-quarters. On the second day they put up at a public house, and as none of them were tired, they went into a yard to amuse themselves, when Allan bet a gallon he could beat them at the quoits; and, as the yard wall was high, his hand-cuffs were readily taken off. During the game the soldiers drank freely, and, after play, they began to dispute which was the best shot. A mark was set up, and Allan was chosen umpire. After firing a number of shots, they laid down their firelocks, when Allan asked the reason of it? "Because our shot is all done," was the reply. "But, surely, you have one charge left for me to try my skill." "Not one," said they. "Then," replied Allan, briskly, "it is time to be off," and springing upon the wall, he disappeared in a moment.—The soldiers

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mazed at his boldness, and their own folly, did
not attempt to follow.

Allan again resisted, and, in an attempt to de-
scend, sprained his foot, and was carried prisoner
on a cart to Alnwick. The disgrace of being
thus dragged into a place where he had been so
expected, was most humiliating to his feelings.
By the influence of the Countess he was liberated,
and again restored to favour; but falling again
into his old vicious habits of gambling and drink-
ing, he received a peremptory order to quit the
castle within one hour.

Allan now travelled northward, and stopping
at a small inn, in Jedburgh, he contrived at cards
to swindle a farmer's son out of 30 guineas, and
knowing that the transaction would not bear in-
vestigation, he thought it prudent to move for-
ward. Arriving at Moffat, he met a gypsy girl,
who had been mending china, and telling fortunes.
Allan accompanied her home, when after a few
hours acquaintance, they agreed to be united, and
were immediately plied in the presence of a gang
of muggers, who were encamped near the place.
His new spouse gave him to understand that she
was no mean personage, being allied in blood to
Will Marshall, the celebrated gypsy chief, and
proposed to visit him. The chief received them
with a hearty welcome; and, on being told that
Allan could play for weel on the sma' pipet,
he asked for a swatch o' his skill. Allan knowing
he was in the presence of royalty, exerted himself
in playing *Pellon Boaning*; but before the game
was half done, Will rose from his seat, and tak-
ing Allan by the hand, said, "You're weel worth
your room—there's nae music pleases me like the
pipet." Allan having continued some time with
the gang, from considerations of personal safety,
was obliged to decamp. Allan had been previous

ly presented with 16 guineas by a dying gipsy friend, and having preserved most of the plunder gained at Jedburgh, was well stocked with cash — yet such was his mean and covetous disposition that he walked ten miles in a dark night in order to steal his wife's pockets, by which he obtained several guineas, the savings of her industry. At length Allan reached Edinburgh, and, being in possession of a considerable sum of money, commenced gentleman, frequented gamble tables, &c., and at the end of 6 weeks possessed £160. He frequently played with an Irish nobleman, who, being a novice in gambling, lost several small sums. One evening the nobleman entered the billiard room intoxicated, and offered in mad bravado to play for £200. Allan having only £160, agreed to deposit that sum, and if he lost to pay the remainder in the morning. The game was soon despatched, for the youth who appeared such an indifferent player won the game with ease. The pretended nobleman was no other than an Irish gamester, and one of the first billiard players in the kingdom. Allan deeply chagrined at his loss, repaired to his lodgings and ordered supper; having collected himself, he packed up his clothes, and among them, *by accident*, a silver tankard belonging to his landlord, and dropping himself from a back window, made off towards Dumfries. While amusing a party of gentlemen there, a stranger, after listening to a few tunes, retired, and in a short time returned with two constables, ordering them to take Allan into custody. Being taken before the bailiff, he was charged with stealing a silver tankard from his brother's house in Edinburgh. Allan denied the charge; but, on his lodgings being searched, the tankard was found amongst his clothes, and he was committed to prison. The goaler being

indisposed, the prisoners were under the direction of the goaler's daughter. Allan now perceiving his advantageous position, he, by his artful flattery, satisfied her of his innocence, and of his strong attachment to her; and, after three weeks intended courtship, the scheme was agreed to that he was to be set at liberty on the condition of making her his wife at the first town they reached. At length the night of elopement arrived: the clothes and the silver tankard, which had been given to her father, in order to produce it at the trial, were tied up in a bundle, which having been delivered to him, he desired her to remain within the door until he reconnoitered; but when out of her sight, he slipped off, and fled with all possible speed: having taken several cross roads, and changed his cloths, he made towards Carlisle.

From Carlisle, he took the road to Whitehaven, where he was joined by no less a patronage than the Gipsy Queen, Madge Gordon, mounted upon a strong galloway; and had the satisfaction of being introduced by her to a party of Gipsies, who were journeying on to a general encampment. Amongst them was a lively interesting girl, an adroit thief, and a most lucky fortune-teller, who agreed to trust her fate with Allan, and soon convinced him that she was not a mere bungler in the art of thieving; she also taught him many ledgerdemean tricks which he afterwards practised with great advantage. Having agreed to accompany his new mistress into Westmoreland, on reaching Appleby, they took lodgings at a small public-house. Allan's female partner went off for a few days into the country, while Allan continued to exercise his profession, and was liberally rewarded. On returning home one night, he discovered his wife Jean in the house. He concealed his surprise, ordered his supper,

and taking a candle, proceeded leisurely up to his room, packed up his pipes and his clothes, and descended gently from the window. Knowing that both the landlord and hostler were drunk he borrowed a horse of a London traveller, and rode off. Before reaching Penrith, he contrived to alter the appearance of the horse, that even his owner could not have sworn to him. Having exchanged the horse for a galloway and ten guineas he set across the country resolving to visit Ireland. At Whitehaven he sold his galloway, and sailed for Dublin.

Amongst the passengers was a gentleman fond of music, who was quite enchanted with Allan's execution on the pipes and hautboy, and greatly exerted himself in establishing his reputation as a musician in Dublin. His talents were valued very highly, and his income averaged ten pounds per week,—Allan, puffed up by success, became ambitious of becoming a man of fashion; and having reached the climax of his folly, furnished a genteel house, in which he placed an extravagant and abandoned mistress, but was soon apprehended as a swindler.

Allan accompanied the officers with a cheerful air, till they reached a well acquainted spot, when making a sudden spring, he disappeared through a narrow passage, and took refuge in the house of a courtesan, who, though a reward was offered for his apprehension, lodged him in a place of safety, and paid him every attention. She procured him an old suit of clothes, and found a vessel which was to sail that night. Allan reached the ship without interruption. On his arrival in Liverpool he pushed on to Skelton. Finding it needful to have his finances recruited, he determined to enlist; he accordingly accosted a sergeant, told him a well feigned story of his being

robbed of his watch and twelve guineas, with which he was hastening home to relieve his parents who were in great distress. The sergeant seemed to sympathize with him, and offered to advance his bounty when he was sworn in. Allan agreed, and accompanied the sergeant to a Justice, when the business was finally concluded. In the evening he pretended he had found a friend to take his money to his father, except a guinea, with which he treated the party. Having procured a billet he left the company, but instead of proceeding to his quarters he left the town, and walking briskly onward for two days, reached Darlington. Here he fell in with a gang of west-country tinkers and coopers, among whom he spent all but two shillings. Leaving Darlington, condemning himself of his folly in squandering his money so foolishly. On arriving at Durham he entered a public house to refresh himself. The first person he met was a recruiting sergeant, and encouraged by his successful escapes, he again determined to enlist. The sergeant seeing him a likely man, plied him with liquor until he gained consent; having first made the bargain that his bounty money should be immediately paid him. The sergeant did so, but not being quite satisfied with his reasons for such conduct, he ordered a corporal to keep strict watch over him. Then only Allan soon observed that his guard was fond of drink with which he so liberally supplied him, that he had to be carried to bed, on which Jimmy pocketed one of the corporal's shirts, and deliberately left the house. He made the best of his way to the house of an old associate, living at Felton Ferry. Here he met a hearty welcome; and after three days' jolly carousal, he proceeded towards Newcastle; but while walking down the Bottle Bank, in Gateshead, he was taken prisoner by two

stout grenadiers. Considering resistance vain, Allan assumed a cheerful appearance, and accompanied them to the guard-house : here he was informed that a party had been from Durham in search of a deserter, and that they suspected him to be the man. Allan protested his innocence, declaring he had not been there, and offered to accompany them thither, expecting to escape on the road : but the officers having sent for some other recruiting party to come over and identify their man, he determined on attempting his escape. Requesting to be shown backwards, one of the privates was ordered to accompany him ; after waiting outside the door until his patience was exhausted, he called to Allan, but receiving no answer, he opened the door, and was filled with astonishment on finding the prisoner had vanished, he never having been one moment from the door. In the meantime Allan explored his way through a narrow nasty dark passage ; and, after much struggling and being nearly suffocated, he emerged from the disgusting channel, near to the Town Moor, where he hid himself among the furze. The bustle about the guard-house, and the search of the soldiers, attracted the attention of several people, who joined in the pursuit ; and Jemmy was much alarmed by the near approach of his pursuers. At this critical moment, the corporal seized a townsman much like Allan in size and dress, and called for assistance. In an instant Jemmy sprung upon his legs, shouting louder than he rest, " Where is the rascal ? " and aided by the darkness of the night, made good his escape.

Arriving at Rothbury, and surrounded by his old friends, he had the satisfaction of again tuning his small pipes, the gift of the Countess of Northumberland, which he valued so highly, that for fear of accident he had left them with a gentleman

but having got possession of them once more, he determined never again to part with them. While thus happy with his old cronies, a secret message was forwarded to Newcastle: the colonel of the regiment immediately despatched a trusty sergeant and five men of courage, to apprehend this daring deserter. The party reached Rothbury in the afternoon; Allan was playing at cards, when a boy standing at the window cried out, "What fine soldiers are coming to our house!" Jemmy suspecting their business, snatched a large poker, and rushed past them as mad with fury. His manner of leaving the house raised suspicions, and they immediately gave chase: but Allan outran his pursuers with ease, and made towards a steep crag, a short distance from the town, the top of which he gained before the soldiers reached the foot of it. Observing a pile of stones on the top of the crag, he could not resist the temptation of giving them a salute as they came up the hill. He, therefore, waited till he thought them sufficiently near, when he pelted them so heartily, that they were glad to return without their errand. The soldiers re-entered the town; and being convinced there was no hope of securing him among his friends, returned to head-quarters, representing Jemmy as one of the most daring and desperate characters they had ever met with.

He then went to Boswell Fair; about eight o'clock he took a walk through the fair in hopes of meeting some of the faa fraternity; when he was accosted in a rude manner, with the appalling words "you are my prisoner." On turning round he saw sergeant Armstrong, of the 25th regiment, with his sword drawn. Allan's first impulse was to run off; but on a second thought, he shook Armstrong very cordially by the hand, and told him, if he would give him his liberty, he would engage to find him half a dozen as fine looking young men as any in the 26th. The sergeant agreed to the

bargain, and accordingly, Allan joined the party
 with his pipes; and by a variety of whimsical ca-
 pions, which so attracted the young men, that before
 night they had enlisted eight of them. The ser-
 geant, so well pleased with their success, invited
 Allan to supper, after which they drank and danced
 until morning. In the meantime, Armstrong sent
 word to a sergeant recruiting at Kelso, to come
 and take him as a deserter; the scheme succeeded
 and just when Allan was taking leave, in marched
 the other sergeant. Allan suspected the plot, and
 bestowed the blackest epithets upon Armstrong
 who calmly insisted on the meeting being quite ac-
 cidental. Allan was immediately marched to Kelso,
 resolving to escape before they reached head quar-
 ters. He tried the effects of whisky upon his
 guards without avail; at night they agreed that
 he should sleep between them. To this Allan made
 no objection, but that he would sleep with his
 clothes on, and they agreed to do the same. Allan
 having provided himself with twined flax and some
 strong twine, with which he cautiously sewed their
 clothes to the bed clothes, as soon as he was sure
 they were asleep. Having accomplished this, he
 sprang out of bed with so little care that he awoke
 both his bed-fellows; but being entangled together
 they rolled on the floor: Allan threw open the win-
 dow, and sliding down the sign-post, effected his
 escape. He now determined to be revenged on
 Armstrong for his treachery; and proceeded direct,
 reached Wooler at an early hour, and demanded
 immediate admittance to the chamber of the ser-
 geant; when Allan in a stern voice addressed him,
 "Sergeant, you see a man before you whom you
 have scandalously abused. I had the good fortune
 to see your colonel yesterday, to whom I related
 your base conduct, and he generously presented
 me with my discharge, (drawing from his pocket a
 paper carefully folded) at the same time he insisted

on me demanding of you two guineas by way of recompence." The sergeant being so abruptly awake, and confounded by this peremptory message gave the sum demanded, and Allan withdrew, hoping he would come to no further harm on the business, further than a reprimand, which he justly deserved.

Allan was highly elevated at this successful piece of roguery, and borrowing a galloway of a brother gipsy, he struck the wilds of the north-west parts of Northumberland. During one of his rambles, he heard that a gentleman farmer was to be married to a lady of fortune the following day. He offered his services which were graciously accepted, and he was invited to remain all night. While meditating on the profits of the engagement, he saw two fiddlers enter, and being afraid that the music of the violin would be preferred to pipe music, he determined to "spoil their fiddling." The two fiddlers made so free with the refreshments of the evening that they had to be carried to bed. Allan, on the contrary, kept himself sober; and observing that the musicians had laid their fiddles beside his pipes, as soon as he discovered that all was quiet, he got out of bed, and put both the fiddles and his pipes into a water tub. Allan allowed the fiddlers to rise before him in the morning, when diligent search was made for their instruments. Allan entered the kitchen, crying out, 'O the rogues, they have got my pipes!' Every one believed they were stolen, till one of the servants discovered the fiddles in the water quite spoiled. Allan hastened to the spot, and said, 'Ah! the loons they have put my pipes in also; whoever has done this deserves to be hanged.' The poor fiddlers being disconcerted, slunk away, while Allan, who had taken the reeds from his pipes, gained the whole profit.

Allan having been concerned in a sheep stealing affair with a foreign gipsy, who had lately joined

the gang, was obliged to fly for fear of consequences, and he arrived at Berwick without a penny. In this state of destitution he had recourse to his old mode of replenishing his finances by enlisting with a spruce young sergeant. The sergeant, when told he had a slippery eel to hold, replied with contempt, "If he was the devil instead of a wandering piper he should not escape me." After Allan had received his bounty, he ordered him to be strictly watched; but Allan appeared so cheerful and happy as threw quite off their guard. The sergeant and corporal readily consented to enjoy themselves over a pot from his bounty money. Allan having called in a fiddler, proposed a threesome reel, and whilst setting to the sergeant, discharged a handful of scotch snuff in his face, which blinded and almost suffocated him, and turning quickly round to the corporal served him in the same manner, and instantly darting out of the room, accomplished his escape. Allan bent his course towards Rothbury, and dispatching a gypsy lad for his pipes, he continued at Holystone until his return, and then travelled to Hexham, where being short of cash, with his usual audacity, he enlisted, and slipped off after receiving half of his bounty. Another recruiting sergeant, named Hays, followed in pursuit, and succeeded in securing him: they watched him strictly, and next day lodged him in the guard-house at Newcastle. Allan finding himself among strangers, lulled their suspicions by his good humoured jokes, and spending his money freely. At length finding a favourable opportunity, he darted out of the guard-house and away.

Hearing that his brother Bob was confined in Edinburgh Castle, for desertion, and would probably be shot, he resolved to attempt his liberation. Having succeeded in obtaining the loan of a miller's

clothes, he readily got admission into the the castle, and by a little duplicity, into the prison where his brother was, and furnishing him with instruments for escape, and appointing a place of meeting, he left the soldiers enjoying his bountiful generosity. Allan had the pleasure of being joined by his brother, and they pressed forward to Dunse. Entering a public-house, they, by a well-told tale about seeking their master's horses, duped a sergeant, who thought them raw country lads, enlisted them, and paid them their bounty. At night having intoxicated the party, they proceeded on their journey:—Rob being apprehensive of being pursued, prudently withdrew, and joined a gang of old friends, while Allan pressed forward to Rothbury. The sergeant whom he had defrauded at Dunse, discovering his retreat, he manœuvred so well as to get entrance into the room where Jemmy was playing. Two soldiers stepped up to him and said, "We want a tune," and immediately commenced dancing, while others secured the door. At the end of the dance the sergeant came forward to speak to the soldiers, when Allan flung up the window and jumped out. Instant chase was given, but without success for Jemmy again got clear off. On the road, after other similar adventures, he joined a company of strolling players, "living in clover to-day, and to-morrow counting the chimney-tops for dinner," and robbing the manager, took the road to London.

Having arrived at London, through the medium of an acquaintance, he was soon brought into notice, and engaged to many respectable parties. Committing a robbery one night, he set off for Southampton. Walking through the streets, under a heavy rain, he discovered a recruiting party dancing in a public house. Allan soon caught the eye of the sergeant, and he suffered himself to be prevailed upon to enlist, having a good part of his bounty-money paid him, so that he

might retreat like a prince. In the morning he wandered to another part of the town, and again enlisted. In a short time he returned to his lodgings to secure a few articles he had stolen from on board ship; when he heard his two sergeants salute each other below, and conversing about their recruits, he heard one of them exclaim, after describing his person and dress, "Oh the Scotch villain, he enlisted with me last night, and I will have him if he be on earth." A drummer-boy playing at marbles near the door, told them the recruit had gone up stairs. Allan in a moment locked the door, and knotting the bed-clothes together, threw them out of the window, having fixed the other end to the bed-post. Jemmy had just time to slip under the bed, when the soldiers broke open the door, and seeing the state of the bed-clothes, and his hat lying in the yard, immediately set off in pursuit. The landlord's daughter coming up stairs to examine the state of the room, Allan discovered himself to her and by a little flattery, she was won over to manœuvre his escape.

On reaching Andover, he entered a public-house, and ordered breakfast, during which a man eyed him so minutely as to render him very uneasy. The man stepped out, but before Allan got one step from the door, he was seized by a party of soldiers, and immediately taken a prisoner to the guard-house, and from thence was removed to prison, the officer observing, that "a desperate man deserved desperate treatment." Allan, on viewing his dreary cell, saw there was no way of escape but by sawing assunder the iron window-bars, which during the night he accomplished. Allan fled with great speed for several miles, when he was obliged to sell his shirt to procure something to eat. On entering a public-house at Devizes, he was accosted by the unpleasant salutation, "Sir, you are my prisoner." With his usual presence of mind he signed that he was begging, and acted the dumb man to such perfection, that the company in the room took his part. Many plans of detection were tried, which Allan continued to defeat; but after having drank his ale, was proceeding to the door, when a bucket of water was

dashed in his face. This unexpected salute caused him to break out in a cold sweat, and when the constable instantly seized him, and, after a desperate struggle, conveyed him to the black hole. On examining the prison, he found there was no hope of escape but by the whinney, which he determined to attempt at night. While sitting musing, the prison door was opened gently, and a female entered and said, "Quick—fly!—no thanks!—my husband may suffer for this negligence; but, remember Dumfries," and as Allan left the place, he recollected that the gaoler's daughter, the sergeant's wife, and his deliverer, were the same person.

Allan according to his custom, struck across the country:—On reaching Darlington, he met with the celebrated Het Whiston, who would treat him. Allan, discovering that she had both silver and gold, succeeded in intoxicating her, when he emptied her pockets, and pursued his journey. On arriving at Chester-Street, he found a number of pitmen raffling for a gun, after which they began to throw for small sums, when Allan offered to stake ten guineas to five on a single throw. The pitmen agreed, and sent for lucky Georgy Dunn to cast for them; but Allan, dexterously changing the dice, threw two above him, and instantly swept the table. He reached Newcastle quite big about the dash he would cut at Rothbury; but on passing the head of the Side, he met an old female acquaintance, who invited him to her residence in the Castle Garth. The next day she absconded, taking with her the whole of his ill-gotten gains, and he was obliged to tramp to Morpeth without a shilling in his pocket. At Morpeth he had recourse to his old expedient, and enlisted. The sergeant suspecting where he had to deal with, had him sworn in, and directly marched off to his officer at Newcastle. The officer being in company, offered to bet fifty pounds to thirty that he should not escape before they reached headquarters at York. He was told not to be too confident, for Allan could double like a fox, and run like a hare. A gentleman accepted the bet, and allowed

him to inform his men of the circumstance, and keep it a secret from Allan. The officer promised to divide his winnings between two corporals and two sergeants, to whom Allan was especially entrusted. One corporal walked before, and the other followed after, with their muskets loaded; while a sergeant walked on each side of him with their swords drawn. Allan being only a recruit, felt indignant at such treatment, and resolved to escape at the risk of his life. They reached Boroughbridge before an opportunity presented itself. As they were passing by the side of a wood, Allan observed that he would be under the necessity of troubling them for a minute; his guards accordingly drew up a few paces before him. Pretending to unbutton, he stooped down, and watching his opportunity, he seized a stone, threw it over their heads, and, in the same moment, dashed into the wood. One of the corporals fired, and, with the other soldiers and recruits, immediately gave chase; but Allan accustomed to ranging through the woods, easily eluded his pursuers, and gaining the open country, made the best of his way to Whitby, where he took shipping, and in twenty hours he landed at Leith. Falling in with an old acquaintance, a shoemaker, from Alnwick, through whom he was engaged to play for their procession, and, instead of parading at York, he was playing before his majesty King Crispin, through the principle streets of Edinburgh.

Allan now returned to Rothbury, and while he was playing one night, he was told that four strange men, not soldiers, were enquiring of a boy, in a low voice, where Jemmy Allan was. Allan suspecting who the strangers were, flew out of the house, and escaped without difficulty. Allan bent his course toward Hexham. The strangers proved to be a sergeant and three of his men, with whom he had enlisted at Morpeth, and discovering the route he had taken, travelled so expeditiously, that they overtook him before he reached Hexham. Allan, in an instant, darted forward, pursued by the whole party; but, losing time in leaping a hedge, he was obliged to defend himself with his

stick ;—he again ran off, but, when passing over a stile, the drummer struck him with his sword upon the wrist. Allan viewed the wound with great emotion, and then looking at the drummer, he exclaimed with a minstrel's pride, "Ye ha'e spoiled the best pipe-hand in England."—Allan was now completely conquered ; the sergeant conducted him to Hexham, and lodged him in the house of correction. But many respectable persons, sorry for his misfortune, interested themselves in procuring his discharge, which was the more readily obtained, as his wound disabled him in future from imposing on the military.

Allan retired to Rothbury, and shortly after married and lived with his wife about three years, with wonderful sobriety ; but he became acquainted with one Mary Rawlins, a loose, dissolute woman. To support Mall's extravagance, he had recourse to all the thievish tricks of his youth. About this time he stole the iron gear from a number of ploughs ; and having loaded a stout ass, he dispatched Mall to sell the plunder to an old acquaintance in Gateshead. The dealer, however, gave her only a trifle for the whole lot, which so exasperated Allan, that he vowed to be revenged. Borrowing three galloways, and accompanied by his honest partener, he reached Pipewellgate between 12 and 1 o'clock in the morning, and entered the dealer's warehouse by means of false keys. Striking a light, he and Mall soon filled the empty panniers with old iron. He then slipped off, and she knocked at the house door. When admitted, she told the dealer she had had good luck, and would sell the whole by lump, if he would be generous. The bargain was soon made, and Allan returned exulting in having justly recompensed this honest man. At length Allan grew weary of Mall, and having secured his pipes and some clean linen, he took up with a gipsy girl, named Nell Clark, thoroughly skilled in the art of deception.

Having a plot laid to dupe a ship captain's wife, whose vessel was lying at the quay, Allan imparted his scheme to Nell, who became interestedly active in its

execution. Discovering the captain on shore. Allan
 paid his wife a visit on board,—Being previously ac-
 quainted, Allan soon persuaded her to elope with him.
 She was true to her appointment, carrying two bundles
 of clothes and other valuables. Nell, acting as a ser-
 vant, took the bundles, and Allan, after walking a little
 way up the Quay, bid the captain's wife wait, till he
 entered a public-house for his pipes; and going in at
 one door, and out at the other which led to the entry
 where Nell was waiting, they proceeded to their lodg-
 ings, and spent the night in drinking. Having sold the
 clothes, they fled to Sunderland, where they spent their
 ill-gotten gains. One night Nell came home greatly
 hurried, and raising Allan out of bed, insisted on mov-
 ing off. When on the road to Newcastle, Allan en-
 quired the reason for such haste. Nell answered,
 "A purse of gold and a watch are worth preserving."
 On reaching Newcastle, Nell bought him a suit of new
 clothes, and then determined to enjoy herself. One
 evening Nell entered their lodging, and said, "Now, my
 man, Jemmy, I'm ready to go." He suspected all was
 not right, and packing up his pipes and clothes, they
 proceeded to Morpeth. Stopping at a spring to drink,
 Allan was preparing the rim of his hat for that purpose,
 when Nell thrust a massive silver tankard into his hand,
 saying, "Fill it half full of water, and I'll add as much
 brandy to hansom our new jug." Apprehensive of pur-
 suit, Allan pushed on to Rothbury, where he shortly
 borrowed a mare of Mr. James Brown, and being ap-
 prehended, was tried in the Moor-hall, found guilty,
 and condemned to be marked in the hand, which, by

the influence of the Duke of Northumberland, was performed at the bar with a cold iron.

After this Allan resided in North Shields, for several years, playing at assemblies, and at night as a wait—during which time he extensively carried on the practice of horse-stealing; whenever he was in want, he paid a visit to the south of Scotland, and borrowed one. An opportunity offering of borrowing one nearer home, he could not resist the temptation. One evening after playing at the sign of the Dun Cow, Quayside, Newcastle, he stole a bay horse from Mr. Robinson, of Gateshead. Two days after, he was apprehended at Jedburgh, and committed to Durham gaol. At the following assizes, held August, 1803, he was found guilty, and received sentence of death, but it was commuted to transportation for life, which was mitigated to perpetual imprisonment. He was confined about seven years, and then removed to the house of correction, where he died on the 13th Nov., 1810, aged 77. At the influence of some gentlemen a pardon was obtained, but it did not arrive till after his death. This document which is curious as being one of the first papers signed by Geo. IV., is possessed by Mr. John Bell, Gateshead.

" All ye whom Music's charms inspire,

Who skilful Minstrels do admire,—

All ye whom bagpipe lilt's can fire,

"Tween Wear and Tweed;

Come strike with me the mournful lyre,

For ALLAN's dead!

“ No more, where Coquet's stream doth glide,
 Shall we view JEMMY in his pride,
 With bagpipe buckled to his side,
 And nymphs and swains
 In groups collect at even tide,
 To hear his strains.

“ When elbow moved, and bellows blew,
 On green or floor the dancers flew,
 In mazy turns ran through and through,
 With cap'ring canter.
 And aye their nimble feet beat true
 To his sweat chanter.

“ Attentive aye, and aye admiring,
 I've listn'd to his pipe inspiring,
 At feast and fair—at race and hiring,
 And then get fu'
 And never thought of home retiring,
 While drone he blew.”



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